



Darlington LINK Newsletter

Issue 5

2010

LINK

Local Involvement Network

**Make your voice heard and
have your say in Health &
Social Care in Darlington.**



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If you require this document in any other format
please contact the LINK office on 01325 380 145

Where are we now?

Darlington LINK have again been very busy since our last news letter. In October we held our 'speak your mind' event which attracted over 40 people all giving their opinions on health and social care in Darlington. From the information gathered the LINK core group have decided to implement a further two task groups. See the full report on page 3.

November saw the presentation of our promotional video in the Cornmill shopping centre from 19th to 22nd where we welcomed a further 65 members to the LINK.

With regards to the work plan, the stroke task group has met jointly with county Durham LINK and once on their own. This has resulted in the group sending a request for further vital information. See page 3 for full details. The GP task Group has again made progress and from the event held in October has been able to gather more information and evidence see page 4 for full information.

Darlington LINK Event

**Dolphin Centre
4th March 2010
5:30-8pm**

Further Information on page 6.

To view a LINK promotional video please use the
following link:

[http://www.darlingtonlink.co.uk/index.php/resources/
cat_view/38-other](http://www.darlingtonlink.co.uk/index.php/resources/cat_view/38-other)

Darlington LINK's Authorised Representatives for Enter and View

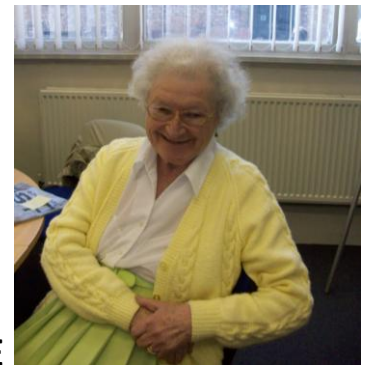
Authorised (LINK) representative's may, in certain circumstances, enter health and social care premises to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the views of the people using those services. To enable LINK to carry out these activities effectively visits must be properly conducted and co-ordinated. The visits must be carried out in conjunction with a constructive relationship between LINK and the organisations commissioning and/or providing the Health or Social Care Services.

To become an authorised representative a LINK member must undertake full and extensive training, have an enhanced clear CRB check completed and follow strict guidelines and procedures when undertaking a visit.

Our current authorised representatives are:



BILL MOREHEAD



JEAN THURKETTLE



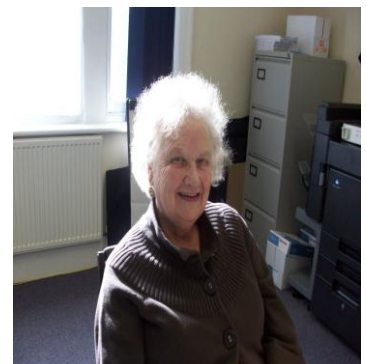
BETTY HOY



TERRY TAYLOR



PAUL BELL



AUDREY LAX

Work Planning



Stroke Services

Both **Darlington** and Durham **LINKs** met in November for an update from NHS about the stroke strategy and the implementation of the strategy progress. Following the implementation of 'seizing the future' many improvements have been made giving **Darlington** and Durham beds dedicated to acute care for stroke patients and Bishop Auckland having a dedicated rehabilitation unit. It was agreed by members present at the meeting that the system seems to be working well although Durham **LINK** had brought issues up that concerned their geographical area. Due to this it was agreed at the meeting that **Darlington** and Durham would look at stroke services that affected their individual geographical area.

Darlington LINK met again in December to decide on their next steps with regards to stroke service and the after care, a letter has been sent requesting information about services and progress against quality markers. Once the information is obtained the task group will meet again to decide on the next steps to take.

Following recent articles in the press suggesting the stroke unit will be closing in **Darlington**, the host and members of the core group attended a meeting with Overview and Scrutiny where they were assured there were no imminent plans to close the stroke unit in **Darlington** and there are NO threats to the jobs of any stroke nurses. There are highlighted staffing issues and it is hoped that these will be resolved before October when they would cause the biggest problems. A further task group meeting has been set up for 29th January at 10am to move forward and decide on the next steps to take.

Get Involved!

It's not too late to get involved with the stroke task group. If you have any expertise, knowledge or an interest in stroke services get involved with this task group. Contact the office for further details.



Seizing the future

Due to other commitments and more recently the poor weather conditions, the task group members have not been able to attend the last few meetings but from the minutes received progress is going well and will move to quarterly meetings.

GP Task Group

The task group have continued to gather information and from the additional information gathered at our event in October the group feel they are now able to compile a list of recommendations. The draft report will be complete by the middle of February. Once this is complete the information will be presented to the core group and a decision will be made as to what recommendations are to be taken forward or if further information is required.

Get Involved!

To see the minutes from the meetings please see the website or call the office. If you have any expertise, knowledge or an interest in GP services get involved with this task group. Contact the office for further details.

LINK Activities & Event Feedback

Darlington LINK “Speak Your Mind” event was held at the Dolphin Centre and attracted over 40 people. The event was organised so that people of Darlington could voice their opinion about Health and Social Care Services in Darlington. The morning was split into two sessions, the first to establish the main areas of concerns and the second session to breakdown these areas of concerns so LINK can work towards changing and improving these aspects of Health and Social Care.



We also had stall holders from other organisations giving out information and leaflets about their services. These included Mental Health Northeast, ICAS Independent Complaints and Advocacy Service, PALS Patient Advise and Liaison Service, GOLD Growing Old Living in Darlington, Advocacy Together and Darlington LINK.

Overview

During the first session the groups gave the facilitators their personal views and opinions of health and social care; they were then asked as a group to identify two main issues so that this could be fed back to the rest of the group. Each group identified two key areas and they were then asked to vote on these areas so that two key priority areas could be established and LINK would be able to add these too their work plan.

- 1) Appropriate, Relevant, Information and Support for all
- 2) Equality agenda, Inclusion for all

Session two the facilitators then asked their groups to break down these key issues and establish one key change that needs to be made and a 1st step that LINK needed to make in order for this to happen.

Next Steps

Darlington LINK will now take all the information that was gathered, set up two task groups to work on the key areas from the event. The other information will be kept and as the LINK establishes itself more and the work plan developed these other areas will be explored.

For more information or to get involved contact Darlington LINK 01325380145 www.darlingtonlink.co.uk email info@darlingtonlink.co.uk text 07525237723

Updates

LINK Member Expense Payment Process

If a person wishes to participate in LINK activities then reasonable expenses will be paid to them. To get involved please contact the LINK office who will agree the details of the excursion/expenses with you. Individual expenses shall be paid for activities authorised by the core group only and in accordance with best practice on payment of volunteer expenses so that costs should not be a barrier to participation.

The guide for claiming expenses is as follows;

Step 1 – LINK members undertake **agreed** activities on behalf of the LINK

Step 2 – LINK member updates their LINK member expense claim throughout the month

Step 3 – At the end of the calendar month the LINK member should complete their expense claim and check that the amount is calculated correctly.

Step 4 – LINK operational staff receive the LINK member expense claim and verify that the claims are allowable and correctly calculated. The claim is then authorised for payment.

Step 5 - When the LINK member expense claims for the previous month have been authorised by LINK staff they will make payment from petty cash or by cheque subject to the payment amount.

Request for your feedback from North East Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership

The North East Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NE RIEP) is working with local councils across the region to improve social care services. We do this by supporting them to work together and in partnership with health services, the voluntary sector and local people.

The aim of this work is to improve health, emotional wellbeing and quality of life and increase choice and control for people across the North East.

We need to hear from people from across the North East region in order to make this work a success. There are a number of ways people can get involved and contribute toward our work.

If you are interested in working with us to help improve social care services for all, or if you want to find out more, please visit our website at:

<http://www.northeastiep.gov.uk/adult/>

<<https://exchange.northumberland.gov.uk/exchweb/bin/redir.asp?URL=http://www.northeastiep.gov.uk/adult/>>

or contact Zoe Campbell,
email: zoe.campbell@northeastcouncils.gov.uk
Telephone: 07901102723.



Make your voice heard
and have your say in
Health & Social Care in
Darlington



AGM & LINK SUCCESS STORIES 2010

What can your LINK Achieve? To include amendment to the constitution

Further information on page 7

Thursday 4th March 10

17:30-20:00

DOLPHIN CENTRE

CENTRAL HALL, Horsemarket, Darlington

Refreshments and Buffet Available

A **LINK** is part of a new Government initiative to give local people a greater say on how their health and social care services are planned and run. **LINKs** are independent and will be made up of local people, community groups and organisations to ensure that local views are listened to, to join contact details below

Everyone Welcome

For further information, or to book a place, please contact the LINK office

Tel: 01325 380145

Website: www.darlingtonlink.co.uk

E-Mail: info@darlingtonlink.co.uk

Changes to the Constitution

AGM

The LINK shall in each calendar year hold a General Meeting as its Annual General Meeting and shall specify the meeting as such in the notices calling it. Every Annual General Meeting except the first shall be held not more than fifteen months after the holding of the last preceding Annual General Meeting.

The business of an Annual General Meeting shall comprise: -

- 1) The consideration of the Report and Accounts,
- 2) The election of Honorary Officers,
- 3) The appointment and fixing of the remuneration of the auditor or auditors, and
- 4) Such other business as may have been specified in the notice calling the meeting.

Decisions at the General Meeting shall be made by passing resolutions: decisions shall be made by Ordinary Resolutions requiring a simple majority of votes cast at a General Meeting. Resolutions to amend the constitution shall require a two thirds majority of the votes cast. Notice of every General Meeting shall be given in writing to every active member of the LINK and via local press to other members, auditors and to such other persons who are entitled to receive notice.

PROPOSED ADDITION TO THE CONSTITUTION

Core Group Members are requested to attend all Core Group Meeting; if 3 meetings are missed in any one year without appropriate apologies that member will automatically relinquish their position on the Core Group.

CHANGING THE LINK CONSTITUTION

This Constitution is open to review and change by a two thirds majority vote of the Darlington LINK. This will be followed by public consultation and agreement and final verification through vote at a public meeting.

INVITATION – TEES ESK AND WEAR VALLEY NHS TRUST WITH LINK EVENT

26th February 2010

2.00-4.00pm

Stockton Education Centre

2.00pm Arrival – Tea and cake

2.15-2.45pm Presentation by Senior Trust representative giving a general overview of the Trust, its services and connections with other trusts.

2.45-3.00pm Questions

3.00-3.45pm – 4.00-5.00pm Workshops to possibly include crisis service and delivering mental health services for people with learning difficulties

If you are interested in attending, please contact the office. Places allocated on first come first served basis. Transport will be arranged where needed.

Get Involved

How you can get Involved!

There are various levels of participation in the **LINK**. You can participate as much or as little as you want to.

- **Members:** Members receive regular newsletters and updates on **LINK** activities. They may be asked to spare a few minutes to fill in a questionnaire or be asked to give their opinion on local services.
- **Core Group:** The core group are elected representatives. They look after the governance and management of the **LINK**. They meet monthly and make decisions regarding the work and action plan for the **LINK**.
- **Task Group:** Task groups look at particular community concerns or issues. Members can join a task group if they have a particular interest in an issue or have experience or knowledge in the area. The task groups aim to work on and resolve community concerns and issues.
- **Other opportunities:** Raising awareness by distributing leaflets and freebies. Helping to run the **LINK** stall at public events.

No skills or particular experience is needed. If you want your voice to be heard the **LINK** can help this happen. This is your chance to have your voice heard and have their say in improving health and social care services.



Task Groups

This is your chance to have your voice heard and have your say in health and social care in

Darlington:

Existing Task Groups:

- **Stroke Services**
- **GP Surgeries**

If you would like to be involved please contact the **LINK** office.

Core Group Meetings

Wednesday 17th February – 14:00-16:00

Thursday 18th March – 18:00-20:00

Tuesday 20th April – 14:00-16:00

All at eVOLution, Church Row



Issues and Concerns

Darlington LINK want to hear community issues and concerns regarding health and social care in **Darlington**. Please call the office with any concerns or fill out the form available at the office or on our website.

Contact Us

Darlington LINK

eVOLution

Church Row

Darlington

DL1 5QD

Tel: 01325 380145

07525 237723

Email: info@darlingtonlink.co.uk

Web: www.darlingtonlink.co.uk

Facebook: [Darlington LINK](#)